

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 AID-05 /092 W

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P R 181337Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5227

INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, RH

SUBJ: RHODESIA PARTY DESIRES AND IS WILLING TO PLAY A ROLE IN
AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT

REF: PRETORIA 1262

SUMMARY: DAVID F. SOUTHERLAND, A PROMINENT MEMBER OF THE RHODESIA
PARTY, HAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY A MARCH 1977 PARTY
PAPER WHICH URGES MODERATE WHITE RHODESIANS TO MAKE EFFORTS
TO ESTABLISH AN INTERIM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT INCLUDING SMITH.
IN SUTHERLAND'S VIEW, THE REVOLT AGAINST SMITH WITHIN THE RF
MAY RESULT IN A SPLIT RIDDING THE PARTY OF ITS DIEHARD CONSERVA-
TIVES, LEAVING A GROUPING WITH A MORE CENTRIST, MODERATE
ORIENTATION. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES A STRENGTHENED ZUPO, AFRICAN
NATIONALISTS, THE RF AND RP COULD, WITH THE CONSTITUTION ABOLISHED
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AND THE PARLIAMENT DISSOLVED, ESTABLISH AN INTERIM NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT TO MANAGE THE TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE. SINE
QUA NON OF SUCH A SCENARIO IS THAT THE RP AND BLACK AFRICANS
BE CONVINCED OF SMITH'S SINCERE COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE.
RP ACKNOWLEDGES THIS IS DIFFICULT PRE-CONDITION TO MEET AND
THAT ANY SOLUTION INVOLVING SMITH IS BOUND TO BE VIEWED WITH
SKEPTICISM BY OUTSIDE WORLD AND REJECTED OUTRIGHT BY MANY AFRICAN

NATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, MODERATE WHITES FEEL THIS IS THE ONLY OPTION LEFT TO THEM FOR A NEGOTIATED RESOLUTION OF AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION. END SUMMARY

1. DAVID F. SUTHERLAND, A REGULAR BUT INFREQUENT VISITOR TO LUSAKA, GAVE AN EMBASSY OFFICER A MARCH 1977 RHODESIA PARTY POLICY PAPER UNDER CURRENT DISCUSSION WITHIN THE PARTY. PARTY PAPER WAS PRESENTED AS REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF MODERATE WHITE RHODESIANS WHO ARE WILLING TO ASSIST IN BRINGING MAJORITY, MULTI-RACIAL RULE TO RHODESIA.

2. THE PAPER WELCOMES THE LAND TENURE AMENDMENT BILL AS THE RF'S ACCEPTANCE OF POLICIES LONG ADVOCATED BY THE OPPOSITION. WHILE THE AMENDMENT DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH, IT WAS AS FAR AS SMITH COULD GO. IT IS A SMALL MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

3. PAPER POSITS THAT, FOR RHODESIA TO SURVIVE THE CHANGE FROM WHITE TO BLACK RULE, IT IS NECESSARY TO CREATE A NON-RACIAL SOCIETY BEFORE THE ADVENT OF BLACK RULE. THE RP IS ANTI-COMMUNIST, BUT DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE NATIONALISTS' ACCEPTANCE OF RUSSIAN, CUBAN AND CHINESE SUPPORT MAKES THEM COMMUNISTS. THEY WERE FORCED TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE FROM THE SOURCES BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE WOULD HELP THEM. TO AVOID CIVIL WAR, THE NATIONALISTS MUST COME TOGETHER AND THE PARTY PAPER CALLS FOR NKOMO AND MUZOREWA TO JOIN FORCES; THE INITIATIVE IS IN THEIR HANDS. AT THE SAME TIME, MUGABE AND SITHOLE ARE SEEN AS DESIRED PARTICIPANTS IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS, BUT EVEN WITHOUT MUGABE THE RP BELIEVES THE NEGOTIATION COULD SUCCEED. EVEN IF MUGABE DIDN'T PARTICIPATE IN A SETTLEMENT, HE WOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN SUBSEQUENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ELECTIONS UNLESS HE OUTLAWED HIMSELF BY ARMED REBELLION AGAINST THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

4. PAPER RECOMMENDS BREAKING THE SEMANTIC BARRIERS IMPOSED BY THE TERMS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SETTLEMENT. IT SETS OUT AS MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION: PARTICIPATION BY NKOMO AND MUZOREWA; RF AND RP; ACCEPTABLE OUTSIDE CHAIRMAN AND FIXED DATE FOR MAJORITY RULE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 24, 1978; ABOLITION OF PRESENT CONSTITUTION AND PARLIAMENT; AND FREEING THE MEDIA FROM RIGHT-WING CONTROL. THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE COMPOSED OF EQUAL NUMBERS OF BLACKS AND WHITES. THE RP SHOULD HOLD A MINORITY OF MINISTERIAL POSTS, INCLUDING DEFENSE AND LAW AND ORDER. THERE ALSO SHOULD BE A NON-VOTING BRITISH CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNING BODY. THE ROLE ENVISAGED FOR THE WEST IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH AND U.S. QUASI-DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN RHODESIA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THEIR REPRESENTATIVES WOULD ACT AS A SORT OF TRUCE SUPERVISORY COMMISSION AND LATER AS GUARANTORS OF A FREE ELECTION.

5. WHEN HE PRESENTED THE RP PAPER, RHODESIA PARTY MEMBER DAVID SUTHERLAND, WELL KNOWN AND RESPECTED IN ZAMBIA, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN A VERY LOW-KEY CONCERNED MANNER. BLACK RHODESIANS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY DISENCHANTED WITH THE DISRUPTION IN THEIR LIVES THE PRESENT LIBERATION STRUGGLE IS PRODUCING. WITHIN RHODESIA THERE IS RESENTMENT OVER FRONTLINE BACKING OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WHICH IS INTERPRETED AS AN EFFORT TO IMPOSE LEADERS ON THE RHODESIAN PEOPLE. ZUPO, DESPITE ITS SUSPECT ORIGIN, MAY GROW IN SUPPORT AND SHOULD BE A FACTOR IN THE SETTLEMENT. THE RP MAINTAINS CONTACTS WITH THE NATIONALISTS FACTIONS AND BELIEVES THEY WOULD PREFER A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. SUTHERLAND IS WELL AWARE OF THE UNPALATABILITY TO MANY OF ANY SOLUTION INVOLVING SMITH AND THE SLIM CHANCES FOR THE SCENARIO HIS PARTY RECOMMENDS SUCCEEDING. NONETHELESS, HE IS CONVINCED THAT AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT, LIKE THE PARTY PROPOSES, BUTTRESSED BY A UK/US MEDIATING PRESENCE IN SALISBURY SHOULD BE TRIED. ONE OF THE BIGGEST BARRIERS TO SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IS THE DEEP DISTRUST OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SMITH ON THE PART OF BLACK AFRICANS AND MODERATE WHITE RHODESIANS. NOTHING CAN MOVE UNTIL THIS IS DISPELLED, BUT IF THE DIEHARD CONSERVATIVES SPLIT OFF FROM THE RF AND A MORE CENTRIST MODERATE GROUP REMAINS WITH SMITH THEN THE STAGE MAY BE SET TO TEST THE VERACITY OF SMITH'S COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE. SUTHERLAND MADE THE POINT SEVERAL TIMES THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE NO UNDERSTANDING OR APPRECIATION EITHER WITHIN THE UK OR US GOVERNMENTS OF THE POSITION OF THE MODERATE WHITE RHODESIANS AND THE ROLE THEY ARE WILLING TO PLAY TO BRING ABOUT MAJORITY, MULTI-RACIAL RULE TO RHODESIA. SUTHERLAND ALSO ARGUED FOR THE CREATION OF U.S. AND U.K. PRESENCES IN RHODESIA TO PROVIDE MORE ACCURATE APPRAISALS OF THE ACTUAL INTERNAL STATE OF AFFAIRS.

6. COPIES OF RP PAPER BEING POUCHED AF/S AND ADDRESSEE POSTS.
LOW

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Sent Date: 18-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
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Expiration:
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To: STATE
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